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Equal chances in higher education?

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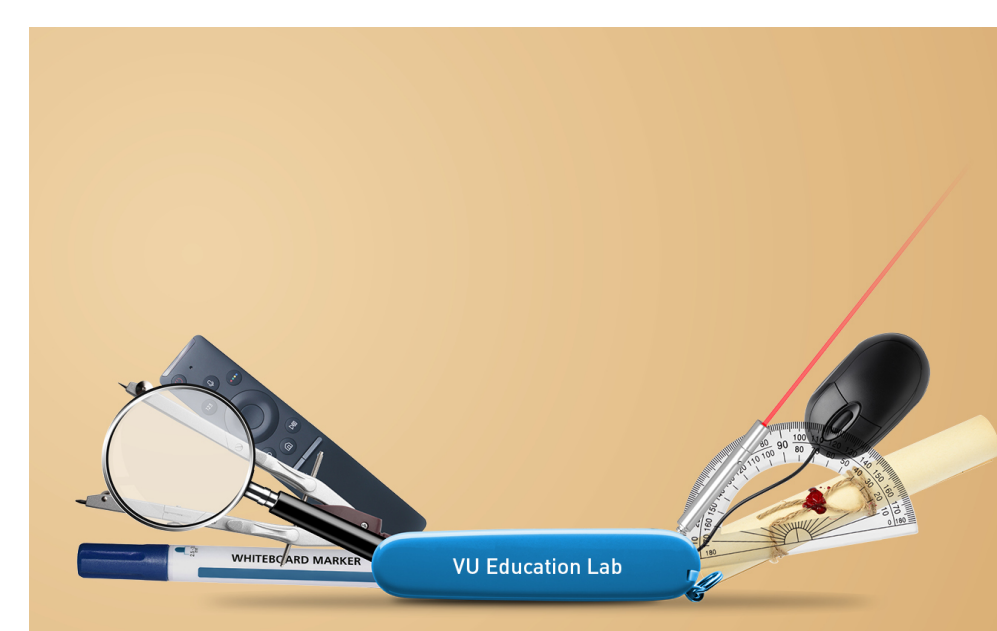
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Equal Chances in Higher Education? Give every student a voice!

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Dialogic classroom conversations

Problem: Teacher initiated and regulated interactions with students in Higher Education are not supportive to all students.

Solution: Dialogic conversations are characterized by reciprocal interactions between students. Dialogic conversations give students time and space to express their ideas, to reason and think together. These conversations stimulate deep learning and improve students' motivation (o.a. Resnick et al., 2015; Van der Veen & van Oers, 2017).

Question: How can we support (junior) teachers in enabling dialogic conversations between students during their classes?

Step 1: Develop material

All junior teachers from Educational Sciences at VU (n = 7) video taped two of their own group sessions with their students.

Researchers selected 30 video fragments that were more and less successful in making classroom interaction more dialogic. Fragments were transcribed and translated into anonymized audio files.

Audio files and transcripts were combined in Powerpoint presentations to enable conversation analyses with teachers at the micro level during the training (Stokoe, 2014) .

Step 2: Training Junior Teachers

Based on the literature, 4 techniques were selected to focus on in the training.

1. Use activities that enable students to explain and explore their ideas;
2. Use moments of silence of minimal 3 seconds;
3. Support students to listen carefully and critically to each other;
4. Challenge students to reason upon ideas of their peers.

Conversation analyses were used to create awareness in teachers and develop their dialogic conversations skills.

Step 3: Evaluation and Dissemination

Videotapes will be analyzed on the quality and duration of dialogic conversations. Teachers reflect on their learning process and skills.

Material used for the training will be published open access and embedded in the current trainings for (junior) teachers at the VU (BKO).

Workshops and presentations at education conferences are used to disseminate the results.

Conversation analyses

Classical IRF model

Teacher *Questions on this topic?*

Silence (2)

Teacher *No?*

Silence (1)

Teacher: *Fine, next topic.*

The power of silence

Teacher *Questions on this topic?*

Silence (10)

Teacher *No?*

Silence (5)

Student: *Uh, maybe I...*

Be explicit

Teacher *More idea's?*

Teacher *It's your discussion, so.....*

Student: *I think.....*

Give time for preparation

Teacher *Start in duo's*

Teacher *What was the idea of you two?*

Student: *We thought.....*

Conclusions

Dialogic conversations in Higher Education can create opportunities for all students to contribute to classroom discussions.

Training (junior) teachers with conversation analyses may be a promising avenue to implement dialogic conversation in the classroom.



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